

Application No. 09/991,280

Amendment dated October 22, 2004

Reply to Office Action mailed March 3, 2004 (Paper No. 15)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 6-10, 15 and 16 are pending in the application. Claims 11, 12, 15 and 16 stand rejected. Claims 11 and 12 have been cancelled without intending to abandon or to dedicate to the public any patentable subject matter. Support for the amendment to the specification are found at least in Figures 6-11.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner has rejected Claims 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. The Examiner notes that the phrase "the annular groove" in line 7 of Claim 15 lacks antecedent basis. Applicants have amended Claim 15 to recite an annular groove on the outer surface of the pressed portion of the elastic sealing member. This amendment provides antecedent basis for the phrase "the annular groove" objected to by the Examiner. Applicants therefore submit that the recitation of the annular groove is sufficiently definite to meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 Should Be Withdrawn

The Examiner has rejected Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,348,048. Applicants have cancelled Claim 11 and therefore this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is moot.

The Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 Should Be Withdrawn

The Examiner has rejected Claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,348,048 in view of Figures 1 and 2 of the instant application. Applicants have cancelled Claim 12 and therefore this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is moot.

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Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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